

REMARKS AND ARGUMENTS

Claim Objections

The Examiner's objection to claim 6 has been addressed in the amendment to claim 6.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-9, 11-13, 17 and 39-46

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-9, 11-13, 17 and 39-46 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Cleaver et al. [US 6,592,238] (hereafter, "Cleaver"). Claim 1 has been amended to more fully describe the subject matter therein. The limitations formerly found in dependent claim 2 have been added to independent claim 1, and claim 2 has been cancelled.

Applicants' claim 1, as amended, requires an array of light sources that is "cuttable at intervals to shorten [the] array while allowing the remaining light sources in [the] array to emit light[.]" This feature is clearly illustrated in FIG.4 and explained on pages 12-15 of the application. Cleaver does not teach, suggest or disclose this limitation. The Examiner cites Cleaver (FIG.18) as disclosing that the light sources are cuttable at intervals. Cleaver teaches an illumination device for simulation of neon lighting. FIG.18 illustrates a circuit schematic that may be used to realize the light sources. Cleaver teaches that the lights can be grouped to achieve various color combinations and so that the various groups can be programmed to flash in sequence. However, Cleaver makes no suggestion that the circuit is cuttable. Cleaver does not

specify where the circuit might be cuttable or how the circuit elements are arranged within the housing so that it can be cut. Because Cleaver does not teach all of the limitations of Applicants' claim 1, the claim is not anticipated by that reference.

Furthermore, a person of reasonable skill in the art would not be motivated from the teachings of Cleaver to modify the neon light simulator device so that it can be cut into smaller segments after the device has been manufactured and still produce light. There is simply no suggestion in the references to do this.

For at least the reasons stated above claim 1 is allowable. Claim 2 is canceled. Claims 3-9, 11-13 and 17 all depend from allowable claim 1, and as such are also allowable.

Applicants' claim 39, as amended, discloses an elongated flexible lighting system that requires "a plurality of electrical power regulators arranged so that each of said plurality of LEDs is driven by substantially the same electrical power." As illustrated in FIG.4 of the application, examples of such power regulators are shown (reference number 70). This particular embodiment includes a plurality of parallel sub-arrays, each of which is powered through its respective regulator ensuring uniform power distribution.

In contrast, Cleaver (FIG.18) shows a circuit where two groups of LEDs are controlled using a single programmable controller 236 and two NPN transistors 234, 242. In this configuration, transistors 234, 242 are connected as switches which are controlled with current from programmable controller 236. The controller 236 "could be programmed to cause the transistors to go on or off, thus causing the first group and then succeeding groups of LEDs to pulse or flash, simulating

motion." (See Cleaver: col.9, lines 35-53). The controller 236 is actually regulating the power (i.e., the current flowing through the LEDs) to all of the LED groups 230, 240. Cleaver teaches regulating the power to each LED group using a single programmable controller. Cleaver does not teach, suggest or disclose a plurality of power regulators each of which is connected to a plurality of LEDs as required by Applicants' claim 39. Because Cleaver does not teach all of the limitations of claim 39, the claim is not anticipated by the reference.

Claims 40-43 depend from allowable claim 39 and as such are also allowable.

Claim 44 teaches an elongated flexible light system that requires "redundant conductive traces" to electrically interconnect LEDs. The redundant traces ensure that the LEDs will continue to receive power in the event that the primary traces should fail. Cleaver does not teach, nor does the Examiner assert that Cleaver teaches, using redundant conductive traces to prevent a power failure in some or all of the LEDs in the light system. Because Cleaver fails to teach every limitation of claim 44, the claim is not anticipated by the cited reference.

Claims 45 and 46 depend from allowable claim 44 and as such are also allowable.

For at least the reasons stated above, Applicants submit that claims 1, 3-9, 11-13, 17 and 39-46 are allowable and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections of these claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 10 and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable in view of Cleaver in combination with two additional references (Camarota and Slayden) cited by the Examiner. Applicants note that claims 10 and 18 depend from claim 1. Because claim 1 is allowable, claims 10 and 18 are also allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 10 and 18.

New Claims

Claims 49 and 50 have been added to the application. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added. Claims 49 and 50 are fully supported in the specification and drawings. (See Application: page 24, lines 22-28; FIG.28).

Claim 49 teaches an elongated flexible lighting system that is bendable at room temperature. Cleaver does not teach this limitation. Rather, Cleaver discloses an illumination device wherein a channel containing LEDs is filled with a filler or potting compound which is allowed to harden for the purpose of maintaining the shape of the device. (See Cleaver: col.6, lines 7-14).

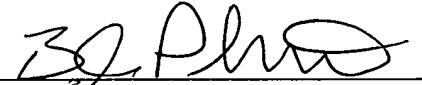
Claim 50 teaches an elongated flexible lighting system that is bendable by force and will return to its original shape after the bending force is removed. Cleaver does not disclose this limitation. As noted above, Cleaver teaches using a filler or potting compound to harden the device into a rigid structure.

Furthermore, neither Camarota nor Slayden teaches all of the limitations of claims 49 or 50.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that claims 1, 3-13, 17, 18, 39-46, 49 and 50 are in condition for allowance, and applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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